

600 was at the same time the wife of his brother. But when a son-in-law gave
586 personal offense to a parent-in-law, it was possible to order dissolution of
606 the marriage.

Case 17. *Murder of Sister-in-law: Lost vs. his nephews*
Informant: Post Oak Jim

x 627 "Once some white men caught some Indians and held them prisoners. Those
682 that were left were short of food. There was a Mexican captive who went to a girl
602 and said that if he could get a horse he'd buy something for them to eat with it. He
wanted to take the best horse. The girl bawled him out. 'There are plenty of horses,
and I don't want to take the best.' She said she didn't want to give it to this crazy
Mexican. After that he wanted to make up again, but they sent him off. He was
interpreter for the Indians at that time.

"The Mexican went up to his wife. He wanted to know where his bow and arrows
were. He took them and went up to the woman who owned the horse and killed her.
Four of her sons were gone. After she died, her people cried and cried, and buried
her out on the prairie. All the rest of the Indians had it in for the Mexican, but they
didn't know what to do about it. The Mexican was a medicine man and a war chief.
The four boys got back. The others were crying for the dead mother. The boys told
them to be quiet for a while. They said they were not going to cry until they finished
everything. The Mexican's wife told him his nephews were back. His wife was the
dead woman's sister. The sons did not eat. They got several men, and told them
what they were going to do.

" 'We're just going to keep still about it for awhile. We'll find out all about it.
This man is a medicine man, and we'll try to take away his medicine. Early in the
morning we'll pack up and leave.' In the morning the men and the four boys got
their guns and got ready to start.

"The Mexican had his horse tied up. There were eight men with the boys. The
Mexican untied his horse, saying, 'They won't come.'

"His wife was all anxious and nervous. She said, 'Lost, what are you going to
do? Your nephews are coming.'

"He said, 'I've no need to be on horseback to fight them. They are just like
women.'

"They came around the tipi, calling, 'Come out, you are nothing but a coward.'
As soon as he came out one of them shot him, and they went on. His wife didn't
know what to do. He was dying; blood was just pouring out. There was one medi-
cine man there, but he didn't have much power. The following evening he was
doctoring Lost, but he died. The wife came down to camp the next morning. Nobody
did anything to the boys. They had it in for him, killed him, and that was all. Lots
of people were glad. He was real mean. Chew Up was the man who killed him."

It is not likely in this instance that the fact of Lost's being a captive laid
him open to attack where a full-blooded Comanche would not have been.

574 special request for a certain animal before the active hunters rode into the
224 slaughter.

422 Objects of material culture were personally owned; but the test of ownership was not production so much as use. Clothing was prepared and made by the women, but owned by the person who wore it. A robe made by a woman for herself was hers, while a robe made for her son or husband belonged to that worthy. Tools and utensils used by the women belonged to the women and were also made by them. Every warrior carried his own kit of tools for the making of bows and arrows. This kit was an indispensable part of his personal equipment and was always carried fastened to his body, so that no matter what the emergency he was prepared to equip himself with weapons. Some older men specialized in arrow-making. They gave arrows to petitioners with or without consideration. Each man marked his own arrows with distinctive feathers or by some characteristic of production. Women made saddles for themselves and held them as their own property. The man's saddle, which was of a slightly different style, was [492] owned by the men. Among the Comanches they were made by Mexican [438] captives who specialized in the trade for pay. [727]

422 Medicine paraphernalia were made by the owner according to his vision
424 directions. If the help of others was needed, they received no pay other
438 than food. The medicine formula was privately owned, but could be transferred in consideration of payment, or given as gift, or inherited. The power itself, however, had to come through a dream as a confirmation of the efficacy of the transfer. War honors were another very distinct form of incorporeal property. These could be transferred as a gift of high esteem, as has been described. They were not, however, articles of trade in economic exchange.

422 The tipi, which was made, erected and moved by the woman, was not
586 hers by proprietary right. The decision as to its disposal belonged to the husband, though if generous and well-disposed towards her, he frequently gave it to the wife on separation.

422 Throughout the simple catalogue of goods we find that articles of personal use were usually personally owned according to the principle of effective utilization.

INHERITANCE

428 In the disposal of a deceased's property there is but one rule which stood
768 out with constancy: *upon the death of a person all effects of his (or her) personal usage were destroyed*. This included clothing, weapons, saddles, tools, paraphernalia, and horses customarily ridden by the deceased. According to Neighbors, "They also killed their favorite wives, but this custom has

593 including beating, gashing with a knife, and even cutting off her nose. How-
684 ever, in the first years of marriage, at least, a girl's parents, or her brother,
could take her back and break up the marriage, especially if they had been
instrumental in arranging it in the first place. This might lead to a damage suit
by the deprived husband, particularly if she were to marry another man
fairly soon; he would often collect from both father and brother, thereby
asserting his rights over the woman even if he had not treated her properly.

593 Men were not expected to be as faithful as their wives and there was not
586 much that the latter could do about it. However, it is interesting to observe
that one of the reasons given for a man leaving his wife was in order to avoid a
scene resulting from her jealousy. Other grounds for desertion were incom-
patibility, and the fact that a woman was a poor housekeeper, though this
latter difficulty might be circumvented, if the woman was otherwise desirable,
by taking on another, younger wife to do the work. It is significant, in con-
nection with the comparative lack of regard for children mentioned above,
that one informant questioned on the subject specifically denied that barren-
ness on the part of a wife was considered a valid excuse for leaving her. Mar-
riage, on the whole, was a rather brittle relationship; divorces were strikingly
frequent.

595 If there were several wives, one was usually considered the favorite, though
this was not necessarily the one the man had married first. She did much less
work, bossed the household, and was much more intimate with her husband.
[482] When traveling, it was she who always carried her husband's shield, while the
others tended the pack animals that carried the greasy meat which would have
impaired the husband's power. If she were menstruating, incidentally, he
[341] carried the shield himself. While the favorite wife occupied an obviously su-
[684] perior position, and was much less liable to be punished for any misdemeanors,
it was in keeping with her position as a more primarily sexual partner that
adulterous lapses on her part were much more severely punished, even to the
point of death.

Polygynous households usually occupied at least two tipis. The secondary
wives lived in one main tipi; the favorite wife might also live here, and visit
her husband more frequently in his private tipi, or she might actually live
separately with him, though the dwellings were, or course, adjacent to each
other. The children lived in the main tipi with the wives; the favorite wife
usually was permitted to have her mother living here too, even if the whole
family were not already living with her parents. This allowed the wife more
free time to be a companion to her husband. If a secondary wife had a different
mother she might occasionally also get her in, but two grandmothers seem to
have been the limit. The tipi usually contained only three beds, one of which
(to the North—the door was to the East) was for the man of the family, and
another might have to be vacated in favor of a visitor at any time, so the wo-
men could not afford to gather in too large numbers.

551 fathers or grandfathers of those who bear these newly established surnames. In no case does a surname stem from farther back than the third generation. Occasionally the surname is taken from the maternal line, from an aunt in one instance, but this is not the rule except in cases of illegitimacy or divorce. The adoption of a person's own Comanche given name as a surname along with an American first name is quite common, e.g., Casper Tis soyo, in which *tisoyó?* *one who has confidence in someone else*, is the Comanche given name of this man of 69. Family names are usually kept in their full original form, but with the agency's rendition of them in English spelling appearing on the rolls; for example, Harry Tobits *ser kumah, tivicikuma?* *real male, or husband*; Lena Suah rah o lah, *suará?ura?* *one who meets somebody intentionally*; Carmelita Delphine Atetewuthtakewa, *?eti-wihtikwa?* *one who strikes with a bow*; Olive Chahtoeibitten, *cahto?ivitin, one who pulls something out on his arrival*; and Cecil Ahtoooomerahle, *?otiwisará?ki?* *brown ears pricking up*.

Comanche names are only infrequently translated into English and these are for the most part medicine-animal names: Frank Redelk, Violet Yellowfish, Vincent Red Bird, Olive Black Otter, Lelia Yellowwolf, Thuma (from Therma) Chicken, and Philip

The husband may repudiate his wife or wives at any time, and take back his presents. The wife too, for some causes, may rebel against her tyrant lord, and leave off serving him. This course on the part of a Comanche wife, covers the husband with such disgrace that it can only be removed by killing someone—the first person he may happen to meet is made the victim. It nearly always happens that he first meets with his truant wife, or some near friend of hers, first after suffering the great disgrace, and, of course, he proceeds to slay her, or the vicarious relative.

IF THE COMANCHE can be said to live under any government, it may be set down as a radical democracy. The war chiefs are elected, on occasions of war, by the council of warriors. Their authority is only counter-nanced and their commands obeyed while hostilities continue. In peace, their authority is merely that derived from their wealth and prowess. The Comanches honor courage and skill in war, and the successful warrior is generally made a chief of some band. There is no unity in the tribe. Besides the seven sub-tribes into which they are divided, each of the seven is made up of small parties, each of which has a leader. In many respects the autonomy of the Comanche tribe differs from any other North American Indians. In most respects, the tribal government is very much the same as found among Xicarillo, Mescaleros, and other wandering Apaches, to which family it is claimed they are nearly related. But in two or three important particulars their method or system of government is entirely distinct from and wholly unlike that of any other people.

When a chief or prominent warrior wishes to organize a warlike expedition, he takes his yellow shield, puts on his eagle plumes, smears war-paint over his face, and assuming the weapons borne by warriors, he rides at a furious pace among the lodges, chanting his war-song as he goes. Any warrior who has taken two scalps may thus organize a marauding expedition, and no authority of chiefs or councils can prevent it. If there are warriors willing to join him they immediately mount their ponies, armed and equipped, and follow the warrior, who first declared war. Their chant is united with his, and thus a war party is made up. But it is not often that the entire band declares for war. The promoter of the war may be a simple warrior, without any authority whatever. For that particular expedition he may be chosen chief, or they may select another to lead them. When going against an enemy the commands of the chiefs are generally obeyed with alacrity. In peaceful seasons they have virtually no chief, or rather every venerable warrior among them is a chief, whose

593 a wife, the other three having died from overwork. Neither would he
587 tolerate a slave woman to help his wife.

• [594] According to Comanche custom, if you buy a wife and if for any reason she is unsatisfactory, if she runs away, or if she dies, you may go to the wife's father and demand the purchase price back, or another wife if there is still an unmarried daughter.

727 Concerning Mo-cho-rook's cruelty, it was said that he never took a prisoner. He killed all, as he came to them: warriors, women, old men, children, babies; and he took no prisoners. My memory is too faulty to give the number of scalps he was supposed to still have. One [583] thing seemed pretty authentic. He was supposed to have a full-length lariat (approximately thirty-three feet) that he had plaited from women's hair—Mexican, Indian, and white.

283 I was never able to learn whether plaiting was an American Indian-developed art, or if it was learned from the Spanish. Many of the [177] old fellows plaited excellent round rawhide ropes, and also many of them were quite proud of their horsehair lariats. Mo-cho-rook was the one and only man who was supposed to have one plaited from women's hair.

752 His death on October 4, 1915, at the age of eighty-nine, was slightly on the prosaic side. At least he died in bed. But he saw fit to lend a dramatic touch. He had sustained a broken hip while working with his horses. They brought a doctor out from Lawton, when he refused to go to the Indian hospital. The doctor put him in a cast, but when the doctor came back in a few days, he found that the old chap had made his wife cut the cast off. She had brought him dogwood switches from the creek, and he had plaited himself a wicker cast to hold his leg and hip. He lived only a short time.

127 As to his age, here is all we have to go by. The Comanche roll was made up soon after the surrender in 1875. At that time he was arbitrarily given the birth year of 1828. That means that they judged him 165 to be fifty years old. It is extremely unlikely that even then any of the warriors who were on the raid when he was kidnapped from Mexico were alive. A little arithmetic will show that they would have been at least seventy years old. That is just older than Indians became at that time, under the conditions they lived in.

701 Another bit of arithmetic brings some interesting conclusions. Supposing that Mo-Cho-rook's birth year is approximately correct, that means he would have been an active warrior by the year 1844. That